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Sport for development and peace

Strengthening the global framework for leveraging sport for development and peace

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 71/160. In the report, the Secretary-General provides a review of progress towards the implementation of the United Nations Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace and proposes an update to the Action Plan, drawing on input received from Member States, the United Nations system and other stakeholders. It also includes recommendations for action by Member States and the United Nations system that bring the existing tracks of sport-based policy and practice at the international level closer together in order to promote improved coherence and collaboration in placing sport at the service of humanity, as an enabler of sustainable development.

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I. Introduction

1. In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Member States recognized sport as an important enabler of sustainable development, highlighting its growing contribution to the realization of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect. In that context, the General Assembly, in its resolution 71/160, invited Member States, the United Nations system and other stakeholders to promote greater awareness and action to foster development and peace and contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda through sport-based initiatives and to promote the integration of sport for development and peace in the development agenda. In so doing, the Assembly invited action across four priority areas, in line with the United Nations Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace, to: (a) further develop a global framework for sport for development and peace; (b) promote and support the integration and mainstreaming of sport for development and peace in development programmes and policies; (c) promote innovative funding mechanisms and multi-stakeholder arrangements; and (d) promote and facilitate monitoring and evaluation tools.

2. Pursuant to resolution 71/160, the present report provides the Assembly with an overview of progress made by stakeholders towards the implementation of the Action Plan across its four priority areas. The report reflects information submitted by Member States[1] and the United Nations system[2] with regard to sport-based initiatives undertaken from 2016 to 2018, as well as the deliberations and recommendations of an ad hoc expert group meeting and inter-agency dialogue convened by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in 2018 on the theme "Strengthening the global framework for leveraging sport for development and peace".[3] Thematic priorities, methodological trends, major challenges and opportunities for further progress along the lines of the action plan are identified in the report. An update to the Action Plan is proposed and related recommendations for action by Member States and the United Nations system are presented to strengthen ties across the existing tracks of sport-based policy and practice at the international level in order to promote improved coherence and collaboration in leveraging sport as an enabler of sustainable development.

II. Developing a global framework

3. A shared vision and approach to the promotion and mainstreaming of sport for development and peace is quickly emerging across the international community. Using the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals as firm foundations

[1] A note verbale dated 23 April 2018 from the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs was sent to all Member States, in which they were requested to provide input for the present report; 11 Member States responded to the request: Austria, Germany, Guatemala, Hungary, Mexico, Monaco, Palau, Philippines, Russian Federation, Turkey and Ukraine.

[2] A memorandum dated 10 May 2018 from the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs was sent to United Nations entities inviting input for the present report; 14 entities responded: Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Department of Public Information, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, International Labour Organization, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, United Nations Office at Geneva, United Nations Volunteers and the World Bank Group.

[3] See www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/2018-expert-group-meetings-and-panel-discussions/sport-development-peace.html.

for their efforts, Member States, the United Nations system, international sport federations and other stakeholders are establishing frameworks for collaborative action on sport, physical activity and active play that use sport as a platform for achieving wider development outcomes rather than focusing on sport as an end in itself. The frameworks for action feature a wide range of goals, including personal and interpersonal social development, health promotion, conflict resolution, intercultural dialogue, social inclusion and economic development. They are aimed at both capitalizing on and strengthening core attributes of participation in sport, physical activity and active play, including the universality of participation in sport and physical activity, the potential of sport to connect individuals and groups, the potential of sport to create self-affirming attitudes, motivation and inspiration, the contribution of sport to physical health and the potential of sport to serve as a context for learning life skills. At the international level, Governments have endorsed the implementation of two major frameworks in this regard, the Kazan Action Plan and the global action plan on physical activity 2018–2030.

A. Kazan Action Plan and the sport policy follow-up framework of the International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport

4. In 2017 the sixth International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport, convened by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), adopted the Kazan Action Plan, incorporating the sport policy follow-up framework proposed by the Conference, which intended "to facilitate international and multi-stakeholder policy convergence, ease international cooperation and foster capacity-building efforts of governmental authorities and sport organisations".[4] At its thirty-ninth session, held in Paris from 30 October to 14 November 2017, the General Conference of UNESCO welcomed the Kazan Action Plan as a "voluntary, overarching reference for fostering international convergence amongst policy-makers in the fields of physical education, physical activity and sport, as well as a tool for aligning international and national policy in these fields with the United Nations 2030 Agenda".[5]

5. The Action Plan and its follow-up framework are oriented along three main policy areas that address inclusive access for all to sport, physical education and physical activity, maximizing the contributions of sport to sustainable development and peace and protecting the integrity of sport. In the Action Plan, the alignment of the sport sector and of sport-based initiatives with sustainable development priorities is encouraged and specific development areas for which there is evidence that sport has a significant impact are outlined.

6. In the Action Plan and its follow-up framework, priority is given to 10 of the Sustainable Development Goals and 36 of the associated targets where sport-based approaches effectively contribute, namely: Goal 3 (good health and well-being), Goal 4 (quality education), Goal 5 (gender equality), Goal 8 (decent work and economic growth), Goal 10 (reduced inequalities), Goal 11 (sustainable cities and communities), Goal 12 (responsible consumption and production), Goal 13 (climate action), Goal 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) and Goal 17 (partnership for the Goals). With a focus on these Goals, the Action Plan serves to build on research conducted at the

[4] See final report of the Sixth International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport (SHS/2017/5 REV), held in Kazan, Russian Federation, on 14 and 15 July 2017.

[5] See UNESCO, *Records of the General Conference, Thirty-ninth Session, Paris, 30 October–14 November 2017, vol. 1, Resolutions*, chap. IV, resolution 30.

international level[6] and in the European context[7] to analyse the contributions of sport to development objectives.

B. Global action plan on physical activity 2018–2030

7. At its seventy-first session, in 2018, in the context of action to address the growing prevalence of noncommunicable diseases, the World Health Assembly endorsed the global action plan on physical activity 2018–2030, which was developed by the World Health Organization in collaboration with the United Nations Interagency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases.[8] The global action plan is aimed at ensuring that all people have access to safe and enabling environments and to a range of opportunities that allow them to be physically active in their daily lives, as a means of improving individual and community health and contributing to the social, cultural and economic development of all nations. It is aimed at achieving a 15 per cent reduction in the global prevalence of physical inactivity in adults and adolescents by 2030.

8. According to the global action plan, efforts to reduce inactivity would contribute to the achievement of 13 of the Sustainable Development Goals, if a systems-based, whole-of-society approach to addressing physical inactivity were implemented. Not surprisingly, there is a direct overlap with the 10 Goals to which sport is found to contribute most readily. In addition, the following Goals are prioritized in the global plan: Goal 2 (zero hunger); Goal 9 (industry, innovation and infrastructure); Goal 15 (life on land); and Goal 17 (partnerships for the Goals). Policy actions under the global plan focus on raising awareness and building knowledge of the benefits of regular physical activity, depending on ability, at all ages; promoting universal access to physical activity, including through equitable access to safe places and safe spaces; increasing opportunities for engagement in physical activity at the individual, family and community levels; and strengthening systems for implementation at all levels.

C. Common vision

1. Aligned policy priorities

9. The Kazan Action Plan and global action plan on physical activity 2018–2030 are clearly complementary in addition to the overlaps in their alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals. In the global action plan, in fact, the Kazan Action Plan is cited as a reference for the commitment of Member States to promoting healthy childhood development through physical activity.[9] While the global plan is aimed at promoting physical activity in itself as a measure of health, with contributions to other development areas as secondary benefits of a whole-of-society approach, the Kazan Action Plan looks more widely at the effective integration of policies on sport, physical education, physical activity and sport-based initiatives within broader development policy frameworks. As such, the global plan is an effective complement to the broader policy focus of the Kazan Action Plan, providing

[6] See, for example, The Commonwealth, *Enhancing the Contribution of Sport to the Sustainable Development Goals* (Commonwealth Secretariat, London, 2017), and The Commonwealth, *Sport for Development and Peace and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Commonwealth Analysis* (Commonwealth Secretariat, London, 2015).

[7] See, for example, Centre for Economics and Business Research, *The Economic Cost of Physical Inactivity in Europe: An International Sport and Culture Association and Centre for Economics and Business Research* (London, 2015).

[8] See www.who.int/news-room/detail/25-05-2018-seventy-first-world-health-assembly-update-25-may.

[9] World Health Organization, *Global Action Plan on Physical Activity 2018–2030: More Active People for a Healthier World* (Geneva, Switzerland, 2018).

a deeper look and comprehensive course of action for universalizing access and eliminating barriers to physical activity and maximizing the contribution of physical activity to improving health and well-being for all, particularly those groups of society in situations of vulnerability or marginalization.

10. The frameworks were established through inclusive processes, drawing on expertise from Governments and key stakeholders across various sectors, including the United Nations system and related organizations, academia, sport organizations and other civil society partners. As such, the frameworks are undergirded by a level of legitimacy that will drive their implementation. Nonetheless, broad political commitment is necessary to ensure sustained progress. There is already growing convergence around the Kazan Action Plan in the alignment of work on sport across the United Nations system, and Member States have begun to recognize its potential as a pivot point for policy coordination. For example, the Human Rights Council, at its thirty-seventh session, in 2018, adopted resolution 37/18, entitled "Promoting human rights through sport and the Olympic ideal" in which it acknowledged the Kazan Action Plan, and the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption, at its seventh session, in 2017, recalled the Action Plan, with particular reference to main policy area III of its follow-up framework.[10]

2. Platforms for global dialogue and deliberation

11. There is a growing platform for dialogue on sport for development and peace across the United Nations intergovernmental architecture. Among the components are the International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport and the Intergovernmental Committee for Physical Education and Sport and its Permanent Consultative Council, comprising organizations of the United Nations system, regional intergovernmental organizations, sport organizations, including the International Olympic Committee, International Paralympic Committee, International Federation of Association Football and International Association of Athletic Federations, and civil society partners. The General Assembly also considers sport for development and peace annually, while the annual Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption addresses corruption in sport.

12. According to resolution 37/18, the Human Rights Council decided to incorporate into its programme of work a thematic panel discussion on promoting human rights through sport and the Olympic ideal. The panel will be held every four years in the lead-up to the summer Olympic and Paralympic Games, with the first to be held at the forty-fourth session of the Council, ahead of the Olympic Games to be held in Tokyo in 2020. Furthermore, in October 2018 the Social Forum of the Human Rights Council will consider the possibilities of using sport and the Olympic ideal to promote human rights for all and to strengthen universal respect for them.

13. The adoption in 2017, by the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption, of resolution 7/8 on corruption in sport, adds a further dimension to the emerging global framework because it seeks to ensure the integrity of sport and avoid undermining the potential contribution of sport to the 2030 Agenda and the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals. The resolution covers a wide range of issues aimed primarily at preventing, detecting, investigating and sanctioning the use of sport for illicit or illegal gain.

[10] See www.unodc.org/unodc/en/corruption/COSP/session7-resolutions.html.

3. Olympic Truce

14. Recognition of the concept of the Olympic Truce remains an integral part of the burgeoning global policy framework on sport for development and peace. The United Nations is resolved to continue its efforts to advance peace through sport and press for ceasefires. In the lead-up to the winter Olympic and Paralympic Games to be held in 2018, the General Assembly adopted resolution 72/6 on building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal. In the resolution, the Assembly urged Member States to observe the Olympic Truce individually and collectively, within the framework of the Charter of the United Nations. The concept of the Olympic Truce as promoted by the United Nations is built upon the ancient Greek tradition of *ekecheiria*, calling for a truce during the Olympic Games to encourage a peaceful environment and ensure safe passage, access and participation for athletes and relevant persons at the Games. In this way, the Olympic Truce is a collective mobilization around peace through sport and sport participation.

15. The concept of protection through sport and safe spaces for sport participation has transcended the Olympic Games and mega events to inform sport-based initiatives as well as the dialogue on sport integrity. The safeguarding of athletes, spectators, workers and other stakeholders, in fact, features as a priority in the Kazan Action Plan under policy area III, on protecting the integrity of sport. The global action plan on physical activity also emphasizes safe places for engagement in physical activity as a priority area. Many of the initiatives reported by Member States and the United Nations system also had this focus.

4. Sport governance and administration to the service of humanity

16. It is important to effectively bridge the sport governance and sport administration agendas with the prevailing sustainable development objectives if sport and physical activity are to reach their full contributory potential. While supporting the independence and autonomy of sport, the General Assembly, in its resolution 71/160, encouraged relevant entities involved in the development and implementation of major sporting events to respect applicable laws and international principles related to human rights and development in order to safeguard the potential positive impact of such events. The Human Rights Council, in its resolution 37/18, made similar observations.

17. Realizing this aspiration requires the complementary vision and leadership of governing and administrative sport bodies at the international level, including the International Olympic Committee, International Paralympic Committee and International Federation of Association Football. The International Olympic Committee has emerged as a forerunner and ardent advocate in this regard. While it is not a policymaking body in the development context, its role in driving the priorities assigned to sport administration and event development across the breadth of Olympic sport positions it as an important ally in shaping the contribution of sport to national and international development efforts. The Committee is pushing forward the implementation of its Olympic Agenda 2020, with its three pillars of credibility, sustainability and youth. Sustainability has become a key aspect in the development of the Olympic Games and in the overall operations of the International Olympic Committee.[11] Through the implementation of the Olympic Agenda 2020 and its related sustainability strategy,[12] the Committee will be a major driver in maximizing the positive impact of sporting events and sport participation in the social, economic and environmental spheres while minimizing the negative impact. The International Olympic Committee has positioned itself as an interlocutor in this regard, providing

[11] See www.olympic.org/olympic-agenda-2020.

[12] See www.olympic.org/sustainability.

mechanisms to ensure the exchange of information and good practices across the Olympic movement.

18. Similarly, in 2016, the International Federation of Association Football released its strategic road map, *FIFA 2.0: The Vision for the Future*. In fulfilling its mission to promote the game of football, protect its integrity and bring the game to all, the Federation recognizes that football has social power and can be a catalyst for leading and shaping societal change. Its strategy is also built on the understanding that, increasingly, the world demands that sport governance structures give attention to the key principles of international development, including sustainability, respect for human rights, inclusion and economic inequality and its impact. As such, it has committed to maximizing community impact, promoting sport as a vehicle for social development, fighting discrimination, promoting sustainability and highlighting fair play, with a particular focus on the organization and preparation of the quadrennial World Cup. The Federation has committed to building the capacity of its member associations and civil society partners to align with its approach.

III. Promoting the mainstreaming of sport for development and peace: reports from the field

19. Governments, the United Nations system and related entities and other stakeholders are deepening their efforts to leverage sport and physical activity to attain broader policy objectives at the regional, national and local levels. In the preparation of the present report, Member States, the United Nations system and related entities were invited to provide information on current sport-based initiatives, including the alignment of these initiatives, if any, with broader development goals and policy initiatives. The reported initiatives fell within a few broad categories, namely sport-based advocacy, sport for society and sport integrity. Initiatives were also found, or reported, to be in alignment with one or more of the 10 Sustainable Development Goals prioritized in the Kazan Action Plan, including the mainstreaming of partnerships for the Goals, encapsulated in Goal 17. A few initiatives also demonstrated alignment with Goal 1 on the eradication of poverty. The discussion in the present section synthesizes the reported information, including highlighting the similarities and complementarities in the policy priorities, programme structure and objectives. A summary of the reported initiatives is available online.[13]

A. Sport-based advocacy

20. Some reported initiatives tapped the potential of sport events and sport participation as a platform to raise awareness and engage the general public in advocating for development-related causes.

21. Monaco reported on its No Finish Line initiative, a "never-ending" race held annually since 1999, in collaboration with the association Children and Future. For eight days participants can walk or run along a 1,400 m circuit. In 2017, 12,927 people participated in the initiative and walked or ran 436,963 km, raising one euro for each kilometre walked or run to support concrete actions for disadvantaged or sick children.

22. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank Group also reported on advocacy-focused initiatives. To commemorate the International Day of

[13] See www.un.org/esa/socdev/sport/summary-inputs.pdf.

Sport for Development and Peace in 2018, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs initiated the #PlayforGlobalGoals online campaign to celebrate the growing contribution of sport to development and peace through the promotion of tolerance, respect, the empowerment of women and youth, health, education and social inclusion. FAO, UNICEF, UNDP and the World Bank Group reported on their work with sportspersons as ambassadors and spokespersons to promote various development objectives. FAO, for example, leverages sport events and sportspersons to engage the media in the global campaign for zero hunger. Similarly, UNICEF is galvanizing its strong network of sport partnerships and athletes who serve as goodwill ambassadors to support major integrated global campaign work in areas such as migration and positive parenting. UNDP also engages with famous athletes to communicate on the Sustainable Development Goals, mobilize communities and fundraise for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The World Bank Group takes a similar approach in its Sport4Climate initiative, which capitalizes on the fame of athletes and the popularity of the sport industry to spread the word about climate change and advocate for Governments, business leaders and everyday global citizens to act now.

23. The Department of Public Information and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, with support from the United Nations Office for Partnerships and the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, are developing collaboration between the United Nations system, including its agencies, funds and programmes, and the International Olympic Committee, International Paralympic Committee and the organizing committee of the Olympic Games to be held in Tokyo in 2020. The collaboration framework is aimed at providing a United Nations-wide platform leading up to and during the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo in 2020 to highlight them as a benchmark for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in a major sporting event, including zero net emissions, ethical labour practices, sustainable sourcing and recycling. The platform will also advocate for the Sustainable Development Goals among the general public, with a focus on inclusion through parity of focus on the Olympic and Paralympic Games and through acknowledging the accomplishments of female athletes and athletes from vulnerable situations, including violent conflict.

B. Sport for society

24. Most initiatives reported by Member States highlighted advances in national policies to capitalize on sport and physical activity to promote healthy living among all segments of the population. Guatemala, Hungary, Mexico, Monaco, Palau, the Russian Federation and Ukraine reported on advances in this regard. A focus on well-planned, health-focused physical education programmes was a common approach. Guatemala, Hungary, Mexico, Palau and Ukraine all referenced specific time-bound action plans or similar policy initiatives that were aimed at increasing the exposure of all segments of society to physical activity and sport. In all cases, specific, measurable targets were set or observed. Guatemala, for example, instituted targets for physical activity for the general population. Similarly, the Russian Federation reported on its intention to increase to 55 per cent, by 2024, the proportion of its citizens who systematically engage in physical activity and sport, a proportion that stands at 36.8 per cent in 2018, up from 8.5 per cent in 2000. Monaco cited its integration of physical education and swimming lessons into school curricula, with attention given to quality instruction and infrastructure.

25. UNDP and UNICEF also reported on leveraging sport for health objectives. UNDP, for example, reported on the 2017 National Human Development Report for Brazil, which focused on the positive relationship between human development and

practising physical sports. In the publication entitled *Movement is Life: Sports and Physical Activities for Everyone*, UNDP noted the association of exercise with improvements in health, cognitive processes, sociability, productivity (due to better physical and mental health) and quality of life in general.

26. Many of the reported initiatives focused on tapping the convening power and value-based, transferable skill set of sport to build human and social capital and/or promote social integration, inclusion and cohesion. The use of sport training as a means of fostering the development of soft skills to promote social cohesion and/or social and economic empowerment and inclusion is a common approach. In many of the reported initiatives with these objectives, the reduction of violent behaviour and of exposure to violence also featured as a primary or secondary goal. Well-designed sport-based initiatives have proved successful in providing the platform for the types of psychosocial interventions required for reconciliation and resolution in post-conflict settings.[14] Sport supports the process of peacebuilding by bridging relationships across groups and communities that might otherwise tend towards distrust and hostility.[15]

27. Germany reported on a number of development cooperation initiatives undertaken in partnership with local and international partners across Government ministries, non-governmental organizations and sport federations that leverage sport for promoting social inclusion, fostering social cohesion and improving psychosocial well-being, gender equality and conflict resolution. These initiatives most often involved training coaches, teachers and community leaders in context-specific coaching and teaching methods that helped to impart the desired life skills and social and emotional competencies. Germany is carrying out initiatives in this regard in Brazil, Colombia, Ethiopia, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Togo and the Occupied Palestinian Territories, with smaller-scale initiatives in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, the Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda and Senegal. Austria also reported on its support for international cooperation on sport for development and peace through its federal grants for sport and development cooperation, and Monaco reported on the sport-based international cooperation activities of the Princess Charlene of Monaco Foundation.

28. UNESCO reported on its Quality Physical Education initiative, which features a cross-cutting approach to improving access to sport and physical activity while using the exposure to sport participation for the development of soft skills and social inclusion objectives. In 2016 and 2017 UNESCO and its partners assisted Fiji, Mexico, South Africa and Zambia in the revision of their national physical education policies, making them inclusive, appropriate in terms of development and child-centred, in line with the UNESCO policy package for quality physical education. With the partnership and funding of six international partners, UNESCO is also implementing an initiative to embed the values of sport, such as fairness, inclusion, respect and equity, across school-based curricula and support teachers in delivering curricula actively and cooperatively through values-based education.

29. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), UNDP, UNESCO, United Nations Volunteers and the World Bank Group reported on initiatives focused on education through sport that aimed at building resilient, inclusive communities. For example, ECLAC seeks to give visibility to and strengthen community projects led by youth aged between 15 and 17 years that are aimed at implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, many of which

[14] Anneke G. Van der Niet, "Football in post-conflict Sierra Leone", *African Historical Review*, vol. 42, No. 2 (2010), pp. 48–60.

[15] K. Höglund and R. Sundberg, "Reconciliation through sports? The case of South Africa", *Third World Quarterly*, vol. 29, No. 4 (2008), pp. 805–818.

tap the potential of sport. UNDP is working in many countries, including Colombia, the Dominican Republic, India and the Sudan, drawing on sport as a tool for inclusion, civic engagement and peace. UNESCO reported on its work with the Malabon city council in the Philippines to implement a sport-based city rejuvenation project to empower out-of-school youth and support their transition to the formal school system or alternative education and/or to employment in the formal economy. UNDP has also recently supported sport-related activities to promote soft diplomacy and cross-border cooperation in Kyrgyzstan and the Republic of Moldova. Similarly, United Nations Volunteers is using sport to promote social inclusion principles in conflict-affected eastern Ukraine. The World Bank Group has undertaken a project on sport and culture for development in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to identify sports and other cultural activities that enhance the resilience, optimism and social well-being of children and youth. The activity will assess the institutional framework and societal context of the country to propose policy options and identify strategic investments and services that harness the educational benefits of sport and other recreational activities.

30. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) undertakes similarly focused and structured initiatives, with a particular focus on preventing youth crime and drug use. With its focus on crime prevention through social development, the UNODC youth global crime prevention initiative serves to strengthen the capacity of sport coaches and teachers to use sport for preventing youth crime and drug use, within relevant national frameworks. In addition, it supports innovative grass-roots initiatives through grants and shares best practices on sport for prevention with education providers and sport practitioners as well as policymakers.

31. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) also combines inclusion and prevention objectives in its Sport for Protection initiatives, which have a similar tone. The Sport for Protection toolkit, for implementation from 2016 to 2018, supports increased protection outcomes for forcibly displaced children and youth. The toolkit has helped to foster better protection outcomes for refugee and internally displaced children and youth through organized sport activities. UNHCR also finalized the learning programme for the youth sport facilitator course, a platform to create, manage and sustain a youth sport programme in marginalized communities and situations in crisis.

32. Among Member States, Monaco and the Philippines reported peace-specific initiatives aimed at promoting reconciliation among communities in conflict. For example, the Monaco-based non-governmental organization Peace and Sport developed the "sport simple solutions" concept, which consists of providing sport equipment, venues and rules with limited resources and allowing the practice of sport anywhere to achieve global peace goals. The initiative played a role in discussions between Colombia and Monaco that led to the signing of an agreement aimed at developing sport activities for social inclusion in the context of the Colombian peace-through-sport programme. Similarly, through its Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, the Philippines has launched initiatives and/or partnered with various non-State armed groups and relevant agencies to conduct sport activities in the context of the peace process as a critical means of preventing the escalation of violence in the conflict-affected area of Mindanao.

33. In most cases, reported initiatives targeted particular segments of the population for intervention, children and youth being the most cited beneficiaries, particularly those in situations of conflict, post-conflict or humanitarian crisis. In addition to children and youth, women and older persons were cited among the targeted beneficiaries in Palau. UNDP also reported on initiatives in Argentina with particular attention given to the empowerment of women and reductions in gender-based violence. UNESCO reported on its actions with Juventus football club to raise

awareness and fight against all forms of discrimination, promote social integration and enhance inclusive societies through football.

34. Persons with disabilities were also among the groups targeted, particular attention being paid to improved access to opportunities for participation in sport and physical activity. The Russian Federation highlighted marked progress in the proportion of persons with disabilities who are systematically active in sport, rising from less than 1 per cent in 2000 to 12.1 per cent in 2018. Turkey and Ukraine also reported on initiatives with similar objectives. These initiatives showcased the alignment of the priorities of the Sustainable Development Goals with the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as well as strong collaboration with the Paralympic and Deaflympic movements.

35. Some attention was also given to the role of sport to preserve and safeguard cultural traditions and ancestral values, related to the so-called traditional games of indigenous peoples. Beginning in 2017, UNESCO has undertaken an initiative to safeguard and promote traditional sports and games. The initiative is also aimed at developing an online and interactive encyclopedia of traditional sports and games, developing policy guidelines to safeguard and promote such sports and games, establishing an international platform on them, and promoting cultural and sporting events. An ad hoc advisory committee and four specialized working groups were established to implement the initiative, which has gained large support from the Group of Friends of UNESCO Traditional Sports and Games, comprised of India, Madagascar, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, Senegal, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

36. Guatemala, the Russian Federation and Ukraine also reported on efforts to improve Olympic and Paralympic performance and allocate more resources to high-performance sports. The Russian Federation has also placed increased attention on developing itself as a centre for mega sport events and on ensuring effective and secure event management. Since 2008, 3,800 international sport competitions have been organized in the country, including 95 world and European championships in Olympic sports, which has resulted in increased tourist travel to the Russian Federation during the period, contributing to social and economic development.

C. Sport integrity

37. With regard to sport integrity, Ukraine reported its ratification of the Anti-Doping Convention of the Council of Europe, the International Convention against Doping in Sport and, in 2016, the Convention on the Manipulation of Sports Competitions of the Council of Europe.

38. Among United Nations entities, the International Labour Organization (ILO), OHCHR and UNODC have been particularly active in advancing a human rights-based approach to sport sustainability and sport implementation, reducing corruption and promoting the ethical implementation of sport and sporting events.

39. Throughout 2016, ILO worked with the International Olympic Committee to prepare the sustainability strategy of the Committee, incorporating elements of the decent work agenda, including workforce, skills, gender and equality and occupational safety and health. ILO and OHCHR also worked with partners to develop the Mega Sporting Events Platform for Human Rights,[16] a multi-stakeholder platform involving international organizations, sport governing bodies, civil society organizations, national human rights institutions and trade unions representing athletes. Based on

[16] See www.ihrb.org/megasportingevents/mse-about.

the sporting chance principles,[17] the initiative is aimed at embedding respect for human rights through the life cycle of mega sporting events and in alignment with the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. This has culminated in the establishment of the Centre for Sport and Human Rights, launched in Geneva in June 2018. In the past three years, OHCHR has also cooperated with a number of Russian and international stakeholders to include non-discrimination policies in preparations for the International Federation of Association Football World Cup in 2018 and beyond. In 2017 OHCHR joined forces with UNESCO and the European Coalition of Cities against Racism to further non-discrimination and anti-racism in sport in the Russian Federation. Consequently, in September 2017, the city of Moscow confirmed its willingness to join the coalition. Participants at the meeting held in September 2017 suggested the establishment of a non-discrimination legacy after the World Cup in 2018. This suggestion was supported by stakeholders in the Russian Federation.

40. UNODC has been providing increasing support to Governments and sport organizations to address the forms of corruption that undermine the integrity of sport and its role in contributing the Sustainable Development Goals. In particular, UNODC, along with Brazil, China, India, the Russian Federation and South Africa, co-organized a conference in 2018 on the theme "Safeguarding sport from corruption", which was attended by numerous Governments, international organizations and sport organizations. UNODC also helped to deliver workshops for officials from Brazil, Ghana, Nigeria and Viet Nam focused on preventing the manipulation of competitions. UNODC also developed numerous publications on sport integrity and served on the working group of the International Partnership against Corruption in Sport, the G-20 Anti-Corruption Working Group and the Working Group on Action 3 of the Kazan Action Plan.

IV. Resource mobilization, programming and implementation

41. The existing international policy discussion on sport, physical activity and active play acknowledges the critical role of cross-sectoral partnerships to ensure not only the effective impact but also the sustainability of funding and reach. Sport-based initiatives have been overly reliant on foreign funding that often leads to donor-driven and short-term initiatives.[18] The longevity and reach of sport-based initiatives are maximized by strategically leveraging their linkages to larger social, economic or political goals at the national and international levels. By working at these intersections, resource mobilization for sport-based initiatives becomes engrained in wider development financing and other forms of resource mobilization. In order to ensure results in this regard, resource mobilization for sport must also incorporate the transfer of knowledge and capacity-building for effective programme design and for securing long-term partnerships.

42. The reported sport-based initiatives featured a wide range of implementing partners, including social development professionals and organizations, sport, academic and humanitarian organizations and Member States. This mix is also reflected in funding sources, with many of the reported initiatives co-funded through State, philanthropic and private means.

[17] See www.ihrb.org/megasportingevents/sporting-chance-principles.

[18] Lindsey, I., "Governance in sport-for-development: problems and possibilities of (not) learning from international development", *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, vol. 52, No. 7 (2017), pp. 801–818.

V. Promoting and facilitating effective research, monitoring and evaluation

43. Experts in the field have highlighted the need to better assess how sport-based initiatives achieve positive outcomes within given contexts. By investigating the procedural and policy dynamics that need to be in place for sport-based initiatives to have a sustainable positive impact, a strengthened evidence base would be established from which to draw good practices and other benchmarks for assessing how and how much sport-based initiatives contribute to sustainable development. This would help in the identification of standard indicators for measuring the contribution of sport.

44. There is also a need to improve the availability of sport-related data and to highlight the applicability of such data to assessing other policy domains. For example, gender-disaggregated data on sport participation provide meaningful insight into progress on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. The reports from the Russian Federation and Ukraine also provided good examples, as data disaggregation showcased the impact on their sport-based initiatives on the inclusion of persons with disabilities.[19]

45. The global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals provides a good starting point for identifying sub-indicators on sport-related policies and programmes. The Commonwealth secretariat, with support from UNESCO and other relevant stakeholders, is leading an effort to develop an indicator framework for assessing the contribution of sport-based initiatives to the achievement of the 10 Sustainable Development Goals prioritized in the Kazan Action Plan. A high-level steering committee and open-ended working group will be established to identify existing good practices and relevant data sets to develop model indicators and provide methodological guidance. The United Nations system will engage with this process, as appropriate, to foster alignment with ongoing work on the review and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

VI. Towards a coherent approach to sport for development and peace in the United Nations and beyond

46. The global framework for sport for development and peace is rapidly taking shape across many fronts. The United Nations has an important role to play in aligning the various tracks, which will require identifying complementarities at the policy level. A level of standardization and/or relatability will therefore be created, which will encourage cross-sectoral assessments and allow Member States to see more easily how investments in one area impact progress in another. As the Kazan Action Plan responds to several needs and objectives of the of the United Nations Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace, which was updated in 2016 — namely the strengthening of a common vision, a coherent information-sharing and policy follow-up framework, as well as priorities for multi-stakeholder partnerships at the international, regional, national and local levels — this can be used as a basis upon which to build strengthened coherence and coordination across the United Nations system.

[19] The full submissions of Member States, the United Nations system and related entities are available at www.un.org/development/desa/dspd/sport-for-development-and-peace.html.

A. United Nations Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace 2018–2020

47. The proposed update to the United Nations Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace is aimed at outlining a system-wide approach to leveraging sport for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The proposed approach would more systematically engage the parallel and complementary work on sport for development and peace across the United Nations system, while also acknowledging and building upon important work being done in other intergovernmental and sport organizations at the international level. It is also aimed at promoting greater coherence and efficiency in programme planning and resource mobilization on the ground. The update is based on the need to optimize the synergies and address the challenges identified in the current review of progress, and benefited from inputs and reviews from stakeholders within and beyond the United Nations system.

48. The proposed update builds on the lines of action of the version adopted in 2016 to outline four thematic priorities: (a) a strengthened global framework on sport for development and peace; (b) policy development for mainstreaming and integrating sport for development and peace in development programmes and policies; (c) resource mobilization, programming and implementation; and (d) research, monitoring and evaluation (see table).

Proposed update to the Action Plan

Principle thematic area	*Objective*	*Action area*
1. Strengthened global framework on sport for development and peace	(a) To strengthen a shared common vision and policy approach to guide the work of Member States and the United Nations system on sport for development and peace (b) To promote the development of a system-wide approach to the review and implementation of sport-based initiatives aimed at enhancing development and peace	(i) Using the overarching policy commitments of the Kazan Action Plan as a basis, align work streams on sport policy, sport for development and peace and sport integrity across the United Nations system (ii) Draw on various expertise within and beyond the United Nations system to further refine the thematic focuses of policy areas of the Kazan Action Plan in order to ensure their full complementarity with the work of the United Nations system across all pillars (iii) Establish guidance and toolkits for using the Kazan Action Plan as a framework for engagement on sport for development and peace across various contexts

Principle thematic area	*Objective*	*Action area*
2. Policy development for mainstreaming and integrating sport for development and peace in development programmes and policies	(a) To foster greater cross-sectoral alignment of the work on sport at the national level (b) To establish national policy frameworks for mainstreaming sport in development processes, in line with the main policy areas of the Kazan Action Plan	Build capacity for joint implementation and/or joint monitoring of the impact of sport-based and sport-related initiatives across ministries of youth, sport, health, environment, justice, education and culture, and other areas, as appropriate to the national context
3. Resource mobilization, programming and implementation	To promote innovative funding mechanisms and multi-stakeholder arrangements at all levels	(i) Encourage multi-stakeholder programme development and implementation at all levels (ii) Identify a forum for the systematic exchange of information on good practices in sport for development and peace across the research, programming and policy fields (iii) Strengthen partnerships at the policy level across the intergovernmental and non-governmental development sectors, sport federations and other civil society stakeholders
4. Research, monitoring and evaluation	(a) To identify cross-cutting issues and/or standards in the field of sport for development and peace (b) To ensure that effective attention is given to the contribution of sport and sport-based initiatives in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development	Strengthen national statistical capacity and monitoring systems to ensure access to sport-related data that are of high quality, accessible, timely, reliable and disaggregated by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migration status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, including through the establishment of indicator protocols

B. Institutional architecture

49. Within the United Nations system, the work on sport for development and peace lies across many work programmes, organizations and intergovernmental mechanisms, working collaboratively with relevant external organizations and mechanisms. In 2017 the Secretary-General began to strengthen collaboration between the Organization and sport federations. Despite closing the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace, the Secretary-General welcomed deeper collaboration with the International Olympic Committee. In so doing he signalled the aim to ensure mutual alignment of the priorities of the Committee and the United Nations in their work on sport for development and peace. With this symbiosis, while recognizing the autonomy of both structures, the United Nations is providing support to the International Olympic Committee in its contribution to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, including through the sustainability strategy of the Committee.

On its part, the Committee is building capacity for a sustainability approach across the Olympic movement. Furthermore, various United Nations entities, sport federations and other stakeholders have been exploring ways of building upon this strategic alliance.[20]

50. As outlined in the present report, many entities are contributing to policy development and implementation in the area of sport. UNESCO plays a pivotal role in its work with ministers and senior officials in charge of sport and physical education. Its lead in supporting the International Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials Responsible for Physical Education and Sport and the Intergovernmental Committee for Physical Education and Sport is critical to any efforts towards policy coherence in the work on sport for development and peace. Similarly, the support of UNODC to the Conference of States Parties to the United Nations Convention against Corruption is important in bridging potential gaps in the attention paid to sport integrity and the ability of sport to positively impact development.

51. Having hosted the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace, which supported the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace, from its inception until its closure in 2017, the United Nations Office at Geneva has continued to play a key role in advancing the sport for development and peace agenda, in its support of policy dialogue in Geneva-based intergovernmental processes as well as its support for multi-stakeholder dialogue on sport for development and peace in the Lake Geneva region, bringing together Geneva-based and other European-based United Nations entities and sport federations.

52. With the closure of the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace, the substantive portfolio on sport for development and peace was transferred to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Since the transfer the Department has been providing support to the intergovernmental mechanisms in New York on sport-related discussions. As the lead entity providing support for the review and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda and a range of intergovernmental commitments addressing the social and economic dimensions of sustainable development, such as poverty, inequality and social inclusion, leaving no one behind, the Department is well placed to mainstream the various tracks of engagement on sport for development and peace into relevant intergovernmental discussions in the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and its advisory bodies and the high-level political forum. The Department will draw on its convening power and its normative and analytical work to support Member States by curating and synthesizing information on good practices in policy development and the implementation of sport-based initiatives aimed at development and peace, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders across civil society, the United Nations system, academia and beyond.

53. Within this institutional landscape, strong inter-agency collaboration will be the key to effective delivery at the policy and programme levels. While the Department of Economic and Social Affairs has begun efforts to reinvigorate inter-agency dialogue on sport for development and peace, the updated United Nations Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace can form a basis for guiding a system-wide approach that engages all work streams and sources of expertise, without introducing duplication and inefficiencies.

[20] Seminar on the theme "Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals through sport: partnerships and institutional responses for greater coherence and effectiveness", held on 5 October 2017, Lausanne Switzerland. See www.thinksport.org/en/latest-news-and-views/sport-sustainable-development-goals-seminar-for-international-key-players-6400.

VII. The way forward

54. The practice of sport and the platform of sporting events present a viable space for engaging with development and peacebuilding where they intersect. The potential positive impact and sustainability of the practice of sport and sporting events on development and peace at any level is dependent on purposeful and participatory planning and implementation, which is based on adequate research, monitoring and evaluation that address not only the outcomes of the initiatives but also the processes that lead to these outcomes. Another important factor is to ensure that there are clear policy frameworks within which sport-based initiatives can operate. These policy frameworks must not only make clear when and how sport-based initiatives are best placed to effect positive change in the development context but provide mechanisms for effectively monitoring these contributions. The institutional architecture in which these frameworks operate must also be organized to systematize the exchange of information and promote coherent, integrated approaches at all levels.

55. **In order to further the work on sport for development and peace at all levels and promote policy coherence, the General Assembly may wish to consider the following recommendations:**

(a) **Acknowledging the Kazan Action Plan and its follow-up framework as a guiding framework for engagement in maximizing the contribution of sport as an enabler of sustainable development, and welcoming the update of the United Nations Action Plan on Sport for Development and Peace 2018–2020 as a means of strengthening system-wide coherence in this area;**

(b) **Encouraging effective integration of the consideration of the contribution of sport to various development objectives in the review and follow-up processes of relevant development frameworks and agendas, including follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development, review of the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities follow-up to the World Programme of Action for Youth and in the review and follow-up processes of the 2030 Agenda, including the high-level political forum on sustainable development;**

(c) **Acknowledging the important advocacy role played by international sport federations in bridging the policy priorities of sport administrators, the United Nations and national and municipal governments, and acknowledging the deepened relationship between the International Olympic Committee and the United Nations in this regard.**

56. **As the United Nations seeks to bring its various work streams on sport for development and peace closer together and to ensure the mainstreamed consideration of sport and sport-based initiatives across its pillars of work, Member States may wish to continue their support of its work on sport for development and peace within the new institutional architecture and encourage strong inter-agency collaboration in this area.**

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Item 27 of the provisional agenda*
Towards global partnerships

Enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners, in particular the private sector**

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

In its resolution 70/224, the General Assembly outlined recommendations for enhancing cooperation between the United Nations and the private sector, recognizing that achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development would require greater engagement of business. Already three years into the journey to achieve the 2030 Agenda, the United Nations must urgently rise to the challenge of unlocking the full potential of collaboration with the private sector and other partners. There is strong consensus throughout the United Nations system that achieving the Sustainable Development Goals requires a significant scaling up of alliances and partnerships, in particular with the private sector. It is also widely acknowledged that greater efforts and stronger system-wide coordination are required to achieve that objective. Throughout the United Nations system, partnership approaches are evolving towards deeper and more strategic collaboration, focusing on innovation, scalability and impact. To sustain and accelerate those positive developments, there is a need to pivot further towards partnerships that more effectively leverage private sector resources and expertise. The United Nations is also seeking to serve increasingly as a catalyst for a new wave of financing and innovation needed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, constituting an important evolution in and transformation of its role in the years ahead. In support of such a transformation, the present report outlines recommendations to facilitate a stronger system-wide approach to partnerships that will enhance the impact of collaboration with the private sector and accelerate progress in realizing the 2030 Agenda.

* A/73/150.

** An unforeseen delay of several days in submission resulted from the need to seek input from additional stakeholders during the final clearance process.

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I. Introduction

1. Pursuant to a decision of the seventy-second General Assembly to defer, on an exceptional basis, consideration of the agenda item entitled "Towards global partnerships" and to include it in the provisional agenda of its seventy-third session, the present report is submitted as an update of the report submitted in compliance with General Assembly resolution 70/224. The report builds on previous reports of the Secretary-General on cooperation between the United Nations and relevant partners (A/56/323, A/58/227, A/60/214, A/64/337, A/66/320, A/68/326 and A/70/296).

2. As reflected in Sustainable Development Goal 17, the 2030 Agenda can only be realized with a strong commitment to partnerships at all levels between governments, the private sector, civil society and others. Similarly, the historic Paris Agreement reached in 2015 united the global community with an ambitious plan to combat climate change and adapt to its effects. Unprecedented levels of interest and commitment from a wide range of stakeholders, including responsible business leaders, is reinforcing efforts by Member States to accelerate climate action.

3. In the compilation of the present report, two principal strands of research were conducted. First, two surveys were conducted to gather system-wide input from 39 participating United Nations entities. In one survey, senior management was canvassed in order to identify and explore the views of the United Nations system on partnership challenges and opportunities. In the second survey, staff from across the system were canvassed in order to gather on-the-ground views regarding partnership practices and identify needs and opportunities with regard to enhancing capacity, coherence and impact. In the second strand, in-depth interviews were conducted with United Nations partnership practitioners and, in some cases, their business partners to explore emerging best practices in the development and management of partnerships and the measurement of impact. Drawing on those data-driven insights and candid reflections, the present report is an attempt to map a robust, evidence-based path towards system-wide transformations that could increase the scale and enhance the impact of collaboration between the United Nations and the private sector and thereby accelerate progress on the 2030 Agenda.

4. The focus in the present report, as in those that preceded it under the same agenda item, is on partnerships between the United Nations and the private sector. Many of the trends, insights and recommendations outlined herein, however, are applicable to all forms of partnership between the United Nations and other actors.

II. Scaling up partnership impact to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

A. Increasing private sector engagement for greater results

5. According to data contributed by United Nations entities to the present report, more than 1,500 partnerships with business are under way throughout the United Nations system. Bilateral partnerships dominate; more than half of the reported partnerships involve only one company. Short-term collaboration remains the norm, with 79 per cent of all such United Nations-business partnerships reportedly lasting less than five years. As the data suggests, more concerted efforts may be required to develop models for business partnership on a greater scale, including models designed to better engage multiple partners over an extended period of time, measure impacts more systematically and advance the 2030 Agenda more effectively.

6. The consensus among United Nations entities is that new alliances and partnerships will be critical to achieving the 2030 Agenda and that the private sector

is key to boosting United Nations capacity to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals. In most entities, it is agreed that achieving the Goals will not be possible without significantly scaling up partnerships between the United Nations and business. It is also broadly recognized, however, that the United Nations is not yet placed to engage business for maximum impact: in only a quarter of United Nations entities is it felt that enough is being done to involve the private sector.

7. Importantly, business leaders share the United Nations view of the tremendous opportunities for increasing business contributions to the 2030 Agenda. Of the more than 1,000 chief executive officers participating in the United Nations Global Compact who were surveyed in 2016, half expressed the belief that the private sector would be the single most important actor in achieving the Goals. They identified partnerships as a key to making an impact: 85 per cent of them stated that cross-sectoral efforts to address global challenges were critical to enabling business to contribute to the achievement of the Goals. That is no doubt also influenced by rapidly changing expectations regarding the role of business in society. Stakeholders, shareholders, governments, consumers and communities are increasingly demanding that companies recognize their shared responsibility for people and the planet. At the same time, while it is felt in most United Nations entities that the Organization must do more to engage the private sector, many business leaders continue to view it as a challenging partner to work with. As corporate interest in partnerships grows, companies have rising expectations of the United Nations.

B. Leveraging comparative advantages for enhanced partnership impact

8. United Nations and business partners agree that together they can achieve greater scale and impact, and advance more sophisticated solutions to common challenges, than by "going it alone". The added value of United Nations-business partnerships that align the core competencies and comparative advantages of all partners is broadly appreciated. The value for companies partnering with the United Nations often lies in the latter's global reach, relationships with local communities around the world, data resources, normative assets and reputation as a capable convener and honest broker. Synergies are being achieved by aligning those strengths with the entrepreneurial and innovative spirit of the private sector. For example, the increased prioritization of partnerships involving technology and telecommunications solutions has driven innovation in the delivery of programmes by leveraging private sector expertise in areas such as digital payment platforms, big data analytics, satellite data mapping, blockchain technology, digital identity and virtual reality.

Box 1

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Vodafone Foundation: instant network schools programme

Since 2013, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Vodafone Foundation have partnered to enhance the quality of education in refugee camps. The innovation and education teams of UNHCR have made use of Vodafone's technical expertise and core capabilities to co-design the instant network schools programme. The programme provides a holistic solution for the transformation of the classroom into a learning hub, complete with internet connectivity, sustainable solar power, an instant classroom (in-a-box digital classroom especially created for the programme and including tablets, laptop, projector and speaker, 3G modem and batteries), localized digital content and a teacher training programme.

By December 2017, 31 such schools had been deployed, benefiting 62,500 refugee students and 850 teachers in seven camps in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, South Sudan and the United Republic of Tanzania. Five more will be deployed by the end of 2018, benefiting an additional 6,000 refugees in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. An independent impact assessment in Kenya and the United Republic of Tanzania found that the programme had significantly improved information and communications technology (ICT) literacy skills among students and teachers and boosted student motivation and teacher confidence.

9. In partnering with the United Nations, the private sector gains access to global and local networks of actors and knowledge that can enhance its ability to pursue new market opportunities that contribute to advancing the Sustainable Development Goals. Recognizing that businesses are increasingly focused on finding partnership opportunities that draw on their core competencies and generate reciprocal value, many United Nations entities are shaping win-win value propositions as part of their efforts to cultivate partnerships. That shift is strategically important, given the continuing evolution of business interests and approaches to sustainability. In 2016, 87 per cent of chief executive officers surveyed stated the belief that the Goals provided an essential opportunity to rethink approaches to sustainable value creation. Leading companies are already seeking ways to drive greater social impact through core business innovations. By investing more in working with the private sector, the United Nations has a great opportunity to accelerate the trend, thereby potentially leading to a dramatic increase in business contributions to the achievement of the Goals.

Box 2

The International Fund for Agricultural Development and Grameen-Intel Social Business: economic growth in rural communities

In 2014, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) partnered with Grameen-Intel Social Business Ltd to pilot a programme for providing technical solutions to rural farmers in Cambodia. The company's eAgro suite is a set of mobile apps that enables farmers to reduce costs and increase productivity yields through soil testing and recommendations on seed selection, fertilizer use and pest control. The system is deployed locally by a network of micro-entrepreneurs, who purchase software licences and receive training to provide eAgro consulting services to local farmers. Since the pilot launch in Cambodia, more than 170 trained entrepreneurs have franchised the system and more than 1,650 farmers have been served. Farmers involved have reported 32 per cent higher yields and a 47 per cent higher gross margin than those using traditional practices only. By integrating a commercial model, where beneficiaries pay a small fee for software licencing and call centre queries, the partnership has demonstrated itself to be financially self-sustaining. The company's "no loss, no dividend" principle demonstrates an innovative blend of for-profit and non-profit philanthropic motivation, as any profits derived from the programme are reinvested into the partnership to ensure its long-term sustainability, expansion and growth.

C. Developing partnership approaches to accelerate impact

10. In the view of United Nations entities, there are five keys to accelerating the impact of United Nations-business partnerships:

(a) Moving away from donation-based partnerships, which are expected to become less important in the coming three to five years, and building more strategic business relationships;

(b) Shaping more innovation-based partnerships that leverage core private-sector competencies and technologies;

(c) Increasing the focus on multi-stakeholder partnerships, which are expected to more than double in the coming three to five years;

(d) Connecting and convening a broader range of actors;

(e) Expanding opportunities for engaging micro-, small and medium enterprises in order to achieve greater local impact.

Heightened emphasis on system-wide coherence and coordination, in particular at the local level, and investing in the development of talent to address gaps in partnership skills will be critical for making progress in each of those five key areas.

11. United Nations entities are increasingly shaping projects and their relationships with business less in the hope of attracting philanthropic contributions in the form of cash donations or single financial transactions and more with a view to building deeper, longer-term collaboration with companies on issues of common interest. Fewer than one third of United Nations entities view their relationships with the private sector as based primarily on philanthropic or in-kind donations. Rather, in three-quarters of the entities surveyed, it is believed that partnerships are becoming more strategic.

12. United Nations entities are shifting their portfolios towards partnerships with greater potential for innovation and impact on a larger scale. They expect innovation-based partnerships, leveraging core business capabilities, to become preponderant in the coming three to five years. For example, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in consultation with the private sector on its strategic plan for the period 2018–2021, has identified ways in which business innovations and technological expertise could advance the Fund's objectives in areas such as data, research and development, new technology, service delivery, e-learning and talent development, logistics, distribution and access to modern family planning. UNFPA and other agencies recognize that creating new, sustainable partnership models that are replicable and scalable requires capitalizing on the unique strengths of the private sector to fill capability gaps in the United Nations, and doing so in a way that focuses on co-creation, joint ownership of programme design and the creation of reciprocal value.

13. It is also recognized in the United Nations system that mobilizing multi-stakeholder partnerships will be critical to complementing government efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The frequency of multi-stakeholder partnerships is expected to more than double in the coming three to five years, making them the most common form of partnership entered into by the United Nations. By embedding multi-stakeholder partnerships in the business model of all its entities and pooling system-wide knowledge, expertise, technologies and financial resources with those of relevant partners, the United Nations can reinvigorate its global leadership role as a convenor, conveyor and facilitator of collaboration among a diverse range of actors.

14. One example of a United Nations-driven multi-stakeholder partnership mobilizing action among governments, multilateral organizations, the private sector and civil society is the Every Woman, Every Child initiative. Since 2015, 70 government and more than 200 multi-stakeholder commitments, representing nearly $30 billion, to improving the health of women, children and adolescents have been made by partners in the initiative.

15. More than 7,000 individuals and organizations contributed to the drafting process for the Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health (2016–2030).

Box 3
The Connecting Business initiative

Launched at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, the Connecting Business initiative is a multi-stakeholder model that actively engages the private sector in disaster risk reduction and crisis preparedness, response and recovery. Thirteen private-sector networks have been established, with operational support provided by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and technical support from the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. The initiative is also helping to better connect the humanitarian and development arms of the United Nations and thereby foster greater collaboration and impact at the local level.

In 2018, the network in Madagascar distributed relief items and helped to improve government information systems in response to tropical cyclones. The network in the Philippines launched the world's first private sector-operated emergency operations centre. Other networks organized information campaigns and simulation exercises, participated in post-disaster needs assessments and policy dialogues, and trained small and medium-sized enterprises in business continuity.

16. Although there is growing interest in the United Nations in strengthening outreach to micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, cultivating relationships with such firms that can make an impact remains a challenge. Accounting for more than 90 per cent of businesses and between 60 and 70 per cent of employment worldwide, those enterprises play a pivotal role in stimulating economic growth and trade, creating decent jobs, eradicating poverty and improving livelihoods. The importance of their role was recognized by the General Assembly in its resolution 71/279 of 6 April 2017, in which it declared 27 June to be Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day.

17. Although many of the United Nations entities that contributed to the present report acknowledged that their work with micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises was limited or nascent, new partnerships and models for collaboration with them offer important lessons. For example, UNDP and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) are testing partnership models in which project costs are shared by United Nations and business partners. Unlike partnerships involving larger companies with the resources to cover project costs, it is often critical for the United Nations to cover or co-invest in project costs in order to work with smaller companies and unlock in-kind resources. Another promising pathway involves mobilizing coalitions of small businesses to work together on structural issues, such as access to credit, capacity-building to enable greater market competitiveness and participation in international trade and involvement in policymaking.

Box 4
United Nations Industrial Development Organization: public-private development partnership for virtual reality forestry training

UNIDO and a consortium of small and medium enterprises have partnered to revitalize forest training in the South African Development Community, using a private-sector virtual reality solution proposed by EON Reality that enables the training of forestry workers in chainsaw operations and maintenance handling in a safer environment and with significantly improved learner comprehension in comparison with traditional methods.

UNIDO implemented an evidence-based beneficiary monitoring programme to evaluate the economic and social impact of the training programme on its approximately

200 participants to date. Tablet technology is used to collect demographic data, such as education levels, income, and employment prospects, from participants at course entry and exit. In June 2017, more than 70 per cent of students rated their job situation as better than before the training and more than 40 per cent reported an increase in earnings. Partners also noted changes in their own business or organization as a consequence of involvement in the programme. Most notably, all partners observed an increase in the capacity of their technical staff and in innovation. Building on that success, UNIDO has extended similar training approaches to another province in South Africa and to other sectors, such as water management in Morocco.

III. Translating partnership challenges into opportunities

18. Adapting to a more resource-constrained environment, the United Nations can make a strategic pivot to innovative partnerships that, among other objectives, could be a catalyst for innovative financing and mobilize multi-stakeholder coalitions to advance the 2030 Agenda. It is widely acknowledged in the United Nations system that the Organization is not doing enough to leverage growing private-sector interest in collaboration. It should, therefore, address gaps in partnership skills and coordination and embed partnerships, in particular multi-stakeholder partnerships, in business models throughout the Organization, especially at the local level. That would reinforce recommendations included in the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, including with regard to the importance of increasing capacity to engage in results-oriented, innovative national, regional and global partnerships and intensifying collaboration with all relevant stakeholders. Under the Deputy Secretary-General, the United Nations Sustainable Development Group is working to achieve those aims, in particular at the local level, as part of the broader effort to reposition the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda.

A. Driving a strategic pivot towards transformational partnerships

19. As resources become increasingly constrained, United Nations entities may feel pressure to resort to older collaboration models and direct the limited resources available for private-sector partnerships towards fundraising efforts rather than building transformational partnerships, which require greater staff time and resources to develop but have exponentially greater potential to drive progress on the 2030 Agenda. Most of the entities that contributed to the present report acknowledged that their ability to engage in transformational and innovative partnerships is limited by resource constraints and that they are caught between the need to diversify funding sources in the current climate and the desire to build relationships, coalitions and other forms of collaboration designed to influence a broader range of actors and achieve greater, longer-term impact.

20. Nonetheless, the United Nations is striving to be more strategic and agile, focusing limited resources on issues and opportunities where it can be most relevant and effective. Agencies, funds and programmes are becoming more adept at communicating their strategic interests and refining their value proposition for partners. The private sector is also seeking deeper forms of collaboration that align partnership investments with core corporate values and company sustainability objectives. As corporate sustainability reporting and stakeholder expectations of companies have evolved over the last decade, the business case for traditional philanthropic donations to the United Nations has become less compelling for companies than projects or investments in regions where companies have interests and operations. Many companies are looking beyond the traditional profit motive and

anchoring their core business in the creation of value through societal impact. Four out of five chief executive officers surveyed by the Global Compact in 2016 said that demonstrating a purpose-driven commitment to sustainability was already a differentiator in their industries.

21. Against that landscape of converging interests, the United Nations should focus on helping businesses to assume a greater role and responsibility in addressing global and local challenges by embracing fundamentally responsible and sustainable business practices. Working with the United Nations can help companies to embrace the Sustainable Development Goals in a holistic, integrated manner. Although the view of a clear majority of United Nations entities is that cross-sector alliances, networks and partnerships are essential for accelerating progress on the Goals, short-term bilateral partnerships continue to predominate. Resources could be more efficiently deployed and long-term impact maximized by shifting from labour-intensive, bilateral implementation projects to scalable multi-year, multi-stakeholder initiatives in which the United Nations played a greater role as convenor and catalyst.

B. Unlocking innovative financing

22. Achieving the 2030 Agenda requires a significant transformation in the approach of the United Nations to financing. In order to secure the trillions of dollars in investment needed to meet the Sustainable Development Goals, greater effort is required to unlock new financial flows, especially from mainstream institutional investors. It is recognized in the United Nations system that there is a need to go beyond mobilizing private-sector funds for its own work and instead facilitate financial innovations that make use of public and private investment to achieve the goals and reinforce responsible business growth. That was a key theme at the United Nations Private Sector Forum in 2017, where chief executive officers, investors and leaders from government, civil society and the United Nations system explored how to increase collaboration to finance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

23. One example is a multidisciplinary action platform of finance practitioners and experts involving the Global Compact and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Finance Initiative and based on the Principles for Responsible Investment. It aims to develop innovative instruments with the potential to direct private finance to critical sustainability solutions. The platform, focusing on emerging or frontier markets, is creating guidance on impact investment strategies in support of the Sustainable Development Goals, with the aim of improving the risk and return profile of investments and attracting institutional investors.

24. A second example is the Sustainable Stock Exchanges Initiative, involving the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the Global Compact, the UNEP Finance Initiative and also based on the Principles for Responsible Investment. Involving more than 60 partner stock exchanges, the initiative is a peer-to-peer learning platform for exploring how stock exchanges, working with investors, regulators and companies, can enhance corporate transparency, and ultimately performance, on environmental, social and corporate governance issues and encourage sustainable investment.

25. Partnership models in which the primary role and objective of the United Nations is to enable capital flow are already being tested. In 2017, UNDP launched a transformational partnership with TRINE, a company that connects investors with solar power entrepreneurs through a crowd-investment platform. The partnership is expected to raise up to $7 million in private capital loans from individual investors for social enterprise projects aiming to lift 540,000 people in five sub-Saharan African countries out of energy poverty. Using its climate action impact tool, UNDP assesses the impact of each funded project in terms of the Sustainable Development Goals to

enable investors to make informed decisions. UNDP and TRINE are jointly working to secure a guarantee fund to help de-risk investments being made in solar power enterprises in the target markets. Facing increased resource constraints, self-funding or self-sustaining partnership models that make use of new social and environmental finance instruments are of growing interest throughout the United Nations. Nearly half of the entities that contributed to the present report indicated that they were considering projects which could be eligible to issue a green, social impact or development bond; however, much remains to be done to achieve that goal. Similarly, although nearly one third of the entities indicated an interest in undertaking projects eligible for certified carbon offsets, only one has done so. To encourage United Nations entities to launch new innovative financing projects, there is a need to support increased risk tolerance and create safe spaces to learn from failure.

Box 5
United Nations Environment Programme: unlocking innovative financing

In October 2016, UNEP launched the Tropical Landscapes Finance Facility in collaboration with BNP Paribas, ADM Capital and the International Centre for Research in Agroforestry and with the support of the Government of Indonesia. It aims to bring long-term finance to projects and companies that stimulate green growth and improve rural livelihoods in Indonesia by scaling up investment in rural renewable energy production and sustainable commodity production that reduces pressure for forest conversion. On 26 February 2018, a first-of-its-kind $95 million landscape bond was issued to capital markets. The deal was made possible through a partial credit guarantee from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) on part of the transaction (rated "Aaa" by Moody's) and a long-term offtake agreement by Michelin. Furthermore, the Green Climate Fund Private Sector Facility has short-listed a proposal by UNEP and BNP Paribas under its "Pitch for the Planet" initiative. A full funding proposal, which is under development, could unlock public capital from the Green Climate Fund to be blended with private capital from agricultural businesses and international investors.

C. Addressing gaps in partnership skill sets, integrity and coordination

26. As the United Nations system looks ahead to new partnership models that bring together their core competencies with the core business assets of partners, it has an opportunity to transform and enhance the culture and impact of its collaboration with businesses by addressing skills gaps in the Organization, embedding partnerships in business models and strengthening the integrity, effectiveness and coordination of partnerships.

27. A third of the partnership professionals who shared insights for the present report indicated that a lack of coordination in the United Nations system was one of the most pressing challenges to effective partnership. Although the benefits of increasing inter-agency collaboration on partnerships are recognized, challenges to such cooperation include: inter-agency competition for partners; a lack of common tools and templates; and confidentiality barriers to the disclosure of partner names and partnership details. It is recognized that the United Nations system needs to embrace a more coordinated and less internally competitive approach to partnerships, in particular given the growing opportunities to engage companies in multiple partnerships across the Organization and the urgent need to combat persistent perceptions among many companies of the United Nations as a challenging partner to work with. Multinational companies with diverse global operations may have the ability to and interest in engaging in multiple partnerships simultaneously. Corporate investments in collaboration with the United Nations could be enhanced and scaled

up through more coordinated relationship management across the Organization. The creation recently of the Partnership Results Group as part of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group has the potential to strengthen system-wide coordination and address those bottlenecks.

Box 6
The Food and Agriculture Organization: advancing organizational partnership capabilities

Since 2013, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has pursued greater engagement with the private sector. The transition of FAO from a historically risk-averse view of partnerships to a risk-managed approach was underpinned by its strategy for partnerships with the private sector of 2013. To institutionalize partnership knowledge, seminars were held and enabling tools and training programmes were created, including a handbook on private sector partnerships, an internal database of lessons learned and best practices and other capacity-building material. At the same time, due diligence processes were streamlined, reducing the time taken for decisions from several months to between two and four weeks and thereby leading to the generation of 120 new partnerships, 80 of them with the private sector. FAO credits the success of the programme to encouragement from the Director General and senior management, which created a positive environment for engaging in those efforts.

28. The capacity of the United Nations to engage in partnerships with business has not kept pace with the growing interest in doing so. A lack of partnership skills within United Nations entities is seen by half of those entities as a significant barrier to effective partnerships. Although the enhancement of resources and skills is widely seen as critical to achieving the 2030 Agenda, the growth of staff teams dedicated to partnerships has slowed in recent years. In only one third of United Nations entities has the number of staff working on business partnerships grown since 2015 and 19 per cent of them reported a reduction. Although partnership capacity is seen as vital, staffing constraints have led some entities to limit their focus to managing existing partnerships and left them unable to develop new strategic relationships.

Box 7
The United Nations Children's Fund: mainstreaming awareness of private sector partnerships at the country level

While the number of staff tasked with private sector partnerships is stable or even decreasing in several agencies, mainstreaming awareness of the role of business stakeholders in advancing the 2030 Agenda in business models across the United Nations can help to sustain and scale up new forms of collaboration. The United Nations Children's Fund has strengthened capacity, recently offering basic training to all staff in India to build awareness, mainstream understanding and promote engagement with business as a way of supporting and advancing children's rights and well-being. Undertaking similar efforts in other agencies, in particular at the country level, could be a constructive way to begin embedding a stronger culture and business model of partnerships across the Organization and accelerate progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

29. Support from senior United Nations officials is critical. In nearly half of the United Nations entities that contributed to the present report, it is felt that executive leadership and support will be the more important factor in scaling up partnerships. The designation of partnerships as a priority area for the United Nations Sustainable

Development Group to address and the increased emphasis on the role of United Nations resident coordinators in supporting local multi-stakeholder partnerships are two promising developments that could help to ensure that senior management supports partnerships more proactively in the future.

30. In more than three quarters of the United Nations entities that contributed to the present report, it is also felt that legal policies and procedures create significant barriers to scaling up partnerships. That may further entrench perceptions among some companies that partnering with the United Nations presents undue bureaucratic hurdles. Legal staff and partnership practitioners should be given the resources and encouragement necessary to find creative solutions to partnership roadblocks. Ensuring that well-resourced legal teams with a sufficient understanding of partnerships can dedicate time to the subject and promoting better communication between senior partnership practitioners and senior legal experts could help to streamline approaches to establishing and growing new partnerships.

31. While the space for partnership opportunities continues to expand, divergent approaches and standards applied by the United Nations to the selection of business partners and due diligence can lead to decision-making that is inconsistent from one entity to another and undermine the integrity and reputation of the Organization as a whole.

32. As noted by the Secretary-General in his report on "Repositioning the United Nations development system to deliver on the 2030 Agenda" (A/72/684-E/2018/7), increasing private sector partnerships to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals necessarily also involves strengthening system-wide integrity, due diligence and risk management. Measures can include, but are not limited to, acceptance of the 10 principles of the Global Compact as a common partnership standard for private sector entities, common due diligence criteria for engaging various groups of non-State actors and the creation of an integrity task force comprising senior United Nations leadership to manage the risks involved in United Nations-business engagement. Those recommendations were reinforced by similar proposals made by the Joint Inspection Unit in its report of 2017 entitled "The United Nations system — private sector partnerships arrangements in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (JIU/REP/2017/8).

33. Most United Nations entities conduct due diligence independently and less than one third of them seek advice from other entities when gathering information on potential corporate partners. Due diligence exclusionary criteria also vary. For example, 61 per cent of United Nations entities exclude companies in the tobacco industry from partnership consideration as a matter of policy, 19 per cent view them as high-risk prospective partners but do not exclude them from consideration and 20 per cent have no policy on the matter.

34. Nonetheless, significant progress has been made through the due diligence working group of the United Nations Private Sector Focal Points on mapping the wide range of integrity practices across the United Nations system, sharing knowledge of good practices and building the case for taking a more common approach to due diligence in policy and practice. To enable informed decision-making in the selection of business partners, the Global Compact facilitates access to two external due diligence research service providers for 18 United Nations entities.

35. The United Nations Sustainable Development Group is exploring how to build on those efforts, recognizing that a more coordinated approach to selecting and engaging responsible business partners could help to safeguard the integrity of the United Nations, meet rising business expectations for a more consistent framework for United Nations engagement and enhance efficiency. More than half of United Nations entities would be willing to consider applying a common due diligence framework and supporting inter-agency sharing of templates for partnership agreements

and memoranda of understanding. Most are also willing to share organizational partnership and due diligence policies, procedures and templates to foster a more consistent approach. Greater support for centralized due diligence research could also help to address inefficiencies arising from due diligence screenings by some entities, relieve pressure on constrained human resources and reduce the risk of perceived or actual conflicts of interest between those evaluating potential partners and those involved in management of the partnership.

36. In its resolution 70/224 of December 2015, the General Assembly requested the United Nations to engage in a more coherent manner with companies that support core United Nations values and commit to Global Compact principles by translating them into operational corporate policies, codes of conduct and management, and monitoring and reporting systems. The General Assembly also called for the implementation of the Guidelines on a Principle-based Approach to the Cooperation between the United Nations and the Business Sector, which were reissued by the Secretary-General in 2015 to serve as a common framework for all United Nations entities and basis for their collaborative efforts with the business sector.

37. Resolution 70/224 and the guidelines constitute a solid policy framework for United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in their efforts to partner with business. More needs to be done, however, to implement the framework and strengthen the integrity, accountability and transparency of United Nations-business partnerships. At present, 80 per cent of United Nations entities verify whether a prospective business partner is a signatory to the Global Compact. One entity makes Global Compact participation a mandatory requirement for partnership and numerous others are considering adopting a similar approach.

38. The Global Compact is a voluntary and not a regulatory initiative, but when a company's highest-level executive publicly commits it to making progress towards the implementation of the 10 principles and to supporting United Nations goals, it signals that it has potential to be a strong long-term partner. Underlining the importance of companies committing to those principles and reporting annually on their progress, otherwise risk expulsion from the initiative, also sends a strong and consistent message to the private sector that the United Nations views responsible business practices, corporate sustainability and public transparency as being of the highest importance.

39. The need for robust integrity and due diligence practices is not limited to partnerships between the United Nations and the business sector. Partnerships involving the United Nations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), particularly those affiliated with private sector entities, present unique challenges that require the further development of policies and best practices to manage risk. Progress in that regard has been made recently with the development of a draft set of guidelines by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in consultation with other United Nations partners, which is intended to govern risk management in partnerships involving NGOs affiliated with business entities. Similarly, the Partnership Results Group of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group is exploring how to strengthen risk management in partnerships involving high net-worth individuals.

IV. Measuring and communicating partnership outcomes

A. Barriers to reporting partnership results

40. In previous resolutions of the General Assembly, Member States have made repeated requests for the disclosure of partners, contributions and matching funds for all relevant partnerships, including at the country level. The business guidelines mirror those disclosure and reporting requirements. Nonetheless, comprehensive

reporting of partnership activity involving the private sector remains a challenge. Few United Nations entities meet the full requirements set forth in resolution 70/224. Most fail to publish all their partnership activity in a readily accessible manner. Some report partners and contributions, but not matching funds, and others report partners but provide no detail on the financial dimensions of the partnerships. Still others do not publicly report their partnerships in any consolidated location.

41. Given the multiple formats and varying content of partnership information that is disclosed in online databases, websites and reports, the information is not easily collated to provide a central overview of partnership activity throughout the United Nations system and enable comparison and measurement. Agency headquarters have also noted challenges in maintaining a comprehensive overview of the number and scope of business partnerships occurring across disparate field operations.

42. It has been posited that competition among United Nations entities for corporate partners discourages the publishing of details about business partnerships, in particular the disclosure of the financial elements of a partnership. In some entities, it has been suggested that partners insist on anonymity when making financial contributions, which impedes full disclosure. Practices for capturing the value of in-kind contributions of goods and services also vary significantly; most United Nations entities acknowledge that performance and skills in that area need improvement.

43. Reporting efforts also tend to vary over partnership lifecycles. While more than half of United Nations entities indicated that they always or usually report partnership information at the outset of collaboration, less than half provide further reporting on the partnership throughout its duration. Less than one in five provides any kind of reporting upon the conclusion of partnerships.

44. Efforts to develop common principles for partnership reporting are underway. For example, the Partnership Data for the Sustainable Development Goals initiative, launched by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Global Compact and the United Nations Office for Partnerships (UNOP) at the partnership exchange event held during the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2016, seeks to bring greater transparency, coherence, impact and comparability to the work carried out by multi-stakeholder partnerships and voluntary initiatives advancing the Goals. The initiative advocates a standardized framework for online platforms that publish partnership information, suggesting that, at least, all platforms should publish information in accordance with the SMART criteria: specific, measurable, achievable, resourced-based and time-bound.

B. Enhancing efforts to measure and communicate partnership impact

45. Sustaining and accelerating progress on the 2030 Agenda depends on the effective measurement of all activities undertaken, across sectors, to realize the Sustainable Development Goals. When it comes to partnerships, there is agreement that the United Nations system must better measure, track and communicate the value of collaboration with the private sector. While nearly three quarters of United Nations entities seek to define reciprocal value propositions for all partners, less than half report capturing robust results and lessons learned from their partnerships. Many United Nations entities admit to challenges in tracking results, in particular where partnerships do not demonstrate a "clear line from A to B" or where the outcome for beneficiaries may take years to determine.

46. United Nations entities also highlight a lack of organizational guidance, standardized methodologies or clear expectations for measuring impact. Partnership evaluation approaches vary widely: half of United Nations entities rarely or never define partnership key performance indicators. Less than one third report evaluating all their partnerships and less than two thirds report evaluating more than half of their

partnerships. Capacity shortfalls were cited as the key obstacle to enhancing the measurement of partnership impact: only one quarter of United Nations entities report having increased their focus on the measurement of impact in the past two years. Without rigorous evaluation criteria and results-based management practices, it is not surprising that nearly half of United Nations entities are unsure whether the expected benefits of partnerships with business are being fully realized.

47. Good practices are, however, beginning to emerge across the United Nations system. Business Call to Action, an initiative launched by UNDP, has established an impact measurement services practice to support its members in measuring and managing their social and environmental impact, along with operational performance. Since 2015, Business Call to Action has worked with 21 inclusive businesses to measure the baseline impact of their business models with a view to scaling up their efforts through access to customer and market insights. In 2018, it launched its free online Impact Lab to support a greater number of companies in their efforts to measure and manage their impact.

48. Taking action in the following four key areas could help to address barriers that stand in the way of capturing and communicating partnership results and to better track the contribution made by partnerships to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda:

(a) Partnership metrics and goals should be defined from the outset to provide clear benchmarks for measuring impact;

(b) A common baseline is needed throughout the United Nations system to set principles and minimum expectations for reporting on partnerships;

(c) Performance management criteria for partnership practitioners should incorporate partnership metrics to reward and encourage best practices;

(d) Strong partnership advocates at all levels of the Organization should be cultivated and should continue to champion collaboration and best practices.

49. It is recognized in the United Nations system that there is a need for a common language and goals for tracking and reporting partnership results. The view in three quarters of the United Nations entities that contributed to the present report is that a common approach to partnership measurement and reporting across the system would enable partnerships on an increased scale and with greater impact. The United Nations-Business Action Hub[2] could serve as a resource-effective mechanism for partnership accountability and coordination. Originally designed to help companies and United Nations entities to explore options for working together, the hub has potential as a central repository for reporting on system-wide partnership activity and impact.

50. Embedding partnerships into performance management criteria for relevant United Nations staff and senior officials could drive a stronger commitment to deliver results, ensuring that partnership discussions are more frequently and meaningfully translated into action and measurable impact. Such incentives will be especially important for scaling up local partnerships. As was noted in the latest quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operation activities for development of the United Nations system and in the report of the Secretary-General (A/72/684-E/2018/7), United Nations resident coordinators and country teams must strengthen support for multi-stakeholder collaboration in order to advance national development needs and priorities and achieve the 2030 Agenda. Global Compact Local Networks in many country settings could work with resident coordinators and country teams to mobilize local entrepreneurs, financial institutions and other private sector actors in such multi-stakeholder efforts to advance national sustainable development priorities.

[2] See https://business.un.org/.

V. Conclusions and recommendations

51. **The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development presents an historic opportunity for the United Nations to cultivate new pathways for achieving common societal goals by expanding the scope and impact of collaboration between governments, the private sector, civil society, academia and others. To unlock the full potential of such partnerships, in particular business partnerships, a number of priorities to strengthen accountability and transparency, enhance coherence and capability and advance system-wide collaboration are recommended. United Nations entities should be encouraged to do the following:**

(a) **Embed multi-stakeholder partnerships into their core business models in order to reinvigorate the global leadership role of the United Nations as a convener, conveyor and facilitator of collaboration among a diverse range of actors;**

(b) **Strengthen capacity to engage in innovative partnership models and leverage financing for the 2030 Agenda. The United Nations should prioritize investing in talent development among partnership practitioners and other relevant staff to address current skills gaps. Building support among governments and the leadership of the United Nations system for increased risk tolerance and creating safe spaces to learn from failure will be critical to driving more innovative partnerships and financing models;**

(c) **Cultivate strong advocates of partnership at all levels of the Organization, reward and encourage best practices and drive a stronger commitment to deliver results and partnerships. Related metrics should be integrated into the performance management criteria of the relevant members of staff and management;**

(d) **Address some of the resource limitations and barriers identified in the present report and offer training and awareness-building opportunities for all staff in order to mainstream an understanding of the role of partnerships, in particular multi-stakeholder partnerships and those involving the private sector, in advancing the 2030 Agenda;**

(e) **Reinforce working-level partnership coordination efforts and facilitate stronger system-wide capacity and coherence, building on the efforts of the United Nations Global Compact to coordinate and share knowledge among partnership practitioners through the United Nations Private Sector Focal Points Network. Senior leadership of the United Nations system should meet regularly under the aegis of a mechanism for joint decision-making and knowledge-sharing on partnerships, such as the Partnership Results Group of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group;**

(f) **Ensure that the Office of Legal Affairs of the Secretariat and the legal teams of United Nations entities have the knowledge and expertise necessary to play an enabling role in increasing the scale and impact of partnerships while managing risks, increase investment in legal resources dedicated to supporting partnerships and support cooperation between legal teams and partnership practitioners to address partnership challenges in a creative and collaborative fashion;**

(g) **Safeguard the reputation of the Organization by ensuring that companies working with the United Nations have a proven commitment to doing business responsibly in line with the 10 principles of the Global Compact. In that regard, a centralized due diligence support function should be developed to help United Nations entities, in particular those with limited partnership experience or capacity, to more effectively manage risk and create operational efficiencies;**

(h) Redouble efforts to meet existing expectations for reporting on partnership activity. Agreed common principles for reporting on partnerships and the use of digital platforms such as the United Nations-Business Action Hub to aggregate partnership data in a single repository can contribute to improved monitoring of partnership activities and impact throughout the United Nations. To better track the contributions of partnerships to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, such data could be compiled in an annual system-wide report with contributions from all United Nations entities partnering with business;

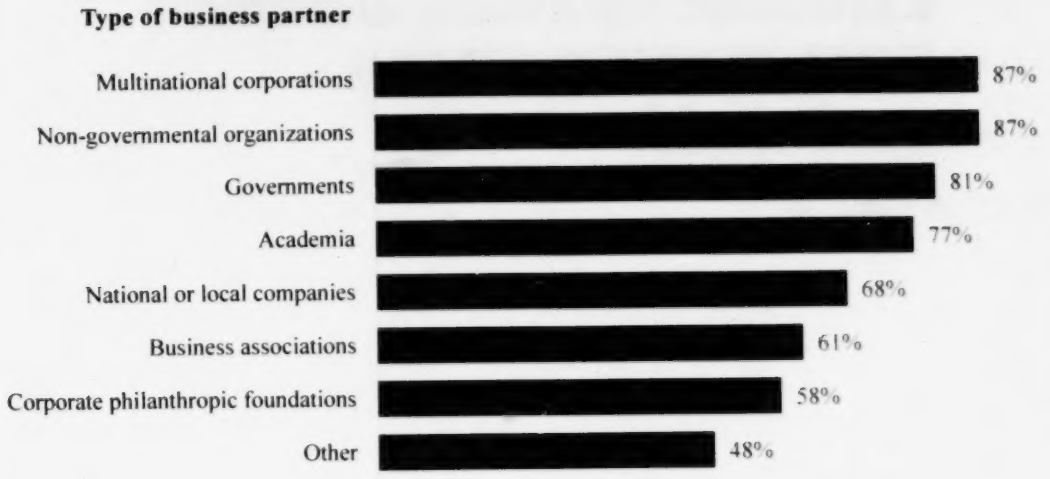
(i) Accelerate progress on the 2030 Agenda at the local level. Global Compact Local Networks and the United Nations system at the country level should continue to strengthen collaboration and coordination. Ongoing efforts to reinvigorate the resident coordinator system provide a unique opportunity in that regard. The interface between resident coordinator offices and support structure for the Networks, where available, should be streamlined and reinforced. Stronger resident coordinator offices are well placed to engage the Networks and the business community in efforts to advance national sustainable development priorities, always relying on and involving relevant entities of the United Nations country team for mandate or sector-specific partnerships. The Networks should, where possible and appropriate, be included in country team planning and coordination.

52. **As the global gateway for partnerships for the Sustainable Development Goals, a reinvigorated UNOP should connect external actors wishing to partner with the United Nations system with the appropriate offices, agencies, funds and programmes. It should also advise the United Nations system on opportunities for meaningful partnership with the private sector, philanthropic institutions, civil society and academia. Without duplicating work on partnerships already in place, UNOP should be an initial entry point and support mechanism for entities seeking to create multisectoral partnerships to achieve the Goals at the global level and, where appropriate, in conjunction with the regional economic commissions and country teams at the regional or national levels.**

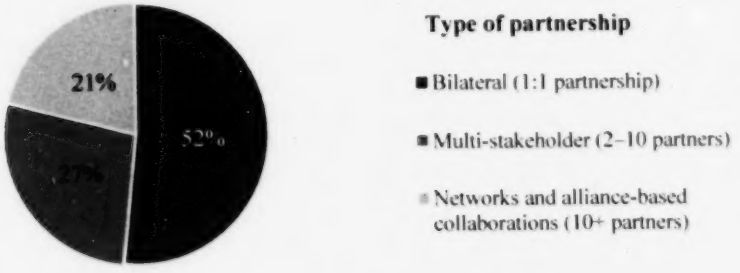
Annex

Types of United Nations system business partners and partnerships, and the average length of business partnerships, as of 2017

A. Percentage of United Nations organizations with each type of business partner



B. Estimated breakdown of types of business partnership, by percentage



C. Average length of United Nations business partnerships